

ID  
①

Comments on meeting with Dr. Hempelmann on April 17, 1974

At the time of the Manhattan Engineering District Dr. Hempelmann was initially the only physician in charge of occupational medicine at Los Alamos and as such was faced with the responsibility of the health protection of several thousands of plutonium workers. As he stated, at that time only inadequate information on the metabolism of plutonium in rats was available and it was of limited usefulness in defining protection criteria for the workers. During a visit by Stafford Warren, Hymer Friedell, and perhaps on other person, Hempelmann and perhaps Langham pointed out the inadequacy of information to set health protection criteria and recommended that information on metabolism of plutonium be obtained in "patients".

According to Hempelmann, Stafford Warren on return to Rochester initiated a clinical program presumably under a contract with Dr. Bassett who at that time was in charge of the Metabolic Ward. It is not clear whether on the basis of first hand knowledge or through discussions with others but Dr. Hempelmann thinks that Dr. Bassett prepared the solutions to be injected, prepared the syringes and handed these to a physician for injection of the patient. He is quite positive that the latter physician did not know the contents of the syringe. In addition <sup>the latter physician</sup> a deliberate decision was made not to inform the patient of the nature of the product that was injected. It is important in this respect to remember that this decision may have been based in part on the security aspects of the project.

Dr. Hempelmann stated that he knew the studies were being conducted but that he was never directly involved and never discussed them with Dr. Waterhouse. Also at the time the injections were performed Dr. Waterhouse

0000002

was a resident at the Metabolic Ward and Dr. Hempelmann believes that she was not directly involved.

Wright Langham was only involved as the focus for plutonium assay of the excreta collected by the Rochester physicians.

Hempelmann remembers that someone told him, perhaps Langham, that at the time when the AEC took over, the AEC's biomedical advisory committee were informed of these experiments. "They were quite upset" and initially considered bringing this before the Ethics Committee. This was never done for reasons unknown to Hempelmann.

Dr. Hempelmann was not involved in the recent follow-up but knew about it through contacts with Pat Durbin and perhaps Robley Evans.

0000002A